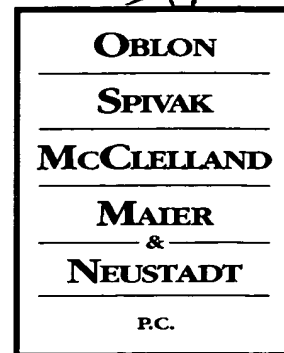




Docket No.: 243490US2S CONT

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313



ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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RE: Application Serial No.: 10/680,256

Applicants: Kyojiro NANBU

Filing Date: October 8, 2003

For: IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD AND IMAGE  
PROCESSING APPARATUS

Group Art Unit: 2624

Examiner: LE, Brian Q.

SIR:

Attached hereto for filing are the following papers:

#### Provisional Election

Our credit card payment form in the amount of \$0.00 is attached covering any required fees. In the event any variance exists between the amount enclosed and the Patent Office charges for filing the above-noted documents, including any fees required under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 for any necessary Extension of Time to make the filing of the attached documents timely, please charge or credit the difference to our Deposit Account No. 15-0030. Further, if these papers are not considered timely filed, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 for the necessary extension of time. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Eckhard H. Kuesters

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DOCKET NO: 243490US2S CONT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF :  
KYOJIRO NANBU : EXAMINER: LE, BRIAN Q  
SERIAL NO: 10/680,256 :  
FILED: OCTOBER 8, 2003 : GROUP ART UNIT: 2624  
FOR: IMAGE PROCESSING METHOD :  
AND IMAGE PROCESSING APPARATUS

PROVISIONAL ELECTION

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313

SIR:

In response to the election requirement dated October 11 2006, Applicant provisionally elects with traverse Group I, Claims 1-14 drawn to an image processing method/apparatus deciding similarity between a first pixel and a second pixel and weighted averaging between the first pixel and second pixel, for further examination on the merits. Applicants reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications directed to the non-elected invention.

Furthermore, while the Election Requirement asserts that the application contains claims to patentably distinct inventions, MPEP § 803 states the following:

If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

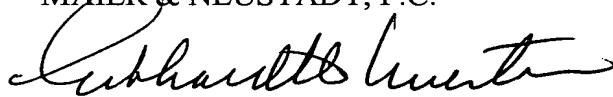
Although the outstanding Official Action identifies different search classifications, it is believed that the claims of the present application would have to be searched in a handful of

sub-classes. Furthermore, since electronic searching is commonly performed, a search may be made of a large number of, or theoretically all, subclasses without substantial additional effort. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully traverse the Restriction Requirement on the grounds that a search and examination of the entire application would not place a *serious* burden on the Examiner, whereas it would be a serious burden on Applicants to prosecute and maintain separate applications.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the requirement to elect a single group be withdrawn, and that a full examination on the merits of Claims 1-32 be conducted.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



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